

Guidance to Combat Racism

Principle Statement

Racial harassment can be defined as racially insulting, threatening or demeaning behaviour or language which the recipient finds offensive and believes to be racist in intent. Such conduct can be an act or a series of acts directed at a person or their property because of their colour, racial or ethnic origin. Racial harassment can take the form of physical abuse and threats or verbal abuse including ridiculing a person because of their race or religion.

Key Principles

Identifying racial harassment:

- a) Jostling, use of weapons, the threat of / actual physical assault including activities normally associated with bullying;
- b) Derogatory name calling, racist abuse, insults, jokes, innuendo;
- c) Racist graffiti;
- d) Wearing racist badges or insignia;
- e) Bringing racist materials such as leaflets, comics or magazines in to the building;
- f) Verbal threats;
- g) Incitement of others to behave in a racist manner;
- h) Racist comments in the course of discussion;
- i) Attempts to recruit for racist organisation of groups;
- j) Ridiculing people because of cultural differences;
- k) Refusal to co-operate with other people because of their colour, race, religion or language;
- l) Written derogatory remarks;
- m) Abuse of personal property.

The above list is not intended to be comprehensive but to highlight the variety of different forms of racial harassment that will require staff to respond immediately.

Dealing with racial harassment

- Staff should firmly explain the wrong done, with or without sanction. In order to mark the seriousness of the incident staff should also seek to involve the Manager.
- Incidents of a particular serious nature should also be notified to the Manager for consideration as to whether to involve outside agencies, including the police.

- Appropriate counselling is to be offered to the perpetrator to avoid possibility of re-offending.

Supporting the complainant:

- Immediate support should be offered by staff to help minimise any possible shock or long term effects. Assistance may need to be sought from the staff welfare services or outside agencies if appropriate.
- Explain the action taken against the perpetrator and reiterate the firm policy the service has towards such behaviour, encouraging complainant(s) to express their own concerns and feelings.
- If the complainant is a service user it will be necessary to arrange a meeting with their parents or carers to explain the action taken and discuss the matter with them.

Service responses:

In dealing with the impact of the incident on the service as a whole it may be necessary to:

- a) Call together those involved in the incident to share information and agree on a course of action;
- b) Discuss the incident with the entire staff team at the next team meeting;
- c) Ensure discussion of the incident with the other children in the service to ensure that there is no backlash or distortion through rumour, reinforcing the service's policy.

Any incident involving racist comments or behaviour must be fully recorded by staff.